

American Poetry, and the 1995 Andres Berger Award from Northwest Writers Inc., plus literally a dozen other awards and mentions.

I rise today to honor the publication, not just because of its many awards, but because many Alaskans still do not understand or appreciate the breadth and scope of the publication and how important it has become as a gateway for Alaskan authors to win recognition from a wider literary audience.

I want to thank the University of Alaska Board of Regents and the leadership of the University of Alaska Anchorage for supporting the publication. Alaska's university system continues to face difficult economic times because of falling Alaska State revenues. It has taken a tremendous commitment to academic excellence to continue the funding necessary to permit the review to be a quality publication and artistic success. The University deserves great credit for its efforts at promoting the publication in these difficult financial times. It is because of the need for more revenues for the University to permit it to reach the highest level of greatness that I continue to press for the University to finally gain its full land-grant entitlement that it should have received at its founding. The University of Alaska Land Grant Bill, still pending full Senate consideration, would greatly help the University gain the economic means to support such important endeavors. But more on that at another time.

I also want to thank and again publicly recognize the work of Mr. Spatz. A recent recipient of the 1999 Edith R. Bullock Award for Excellence—the most prestigious award bestowed by the University of Alaska Foundation, Mr. Spatz is a professor and chair of the University of Alaska Anchorage's Department of Creative Writing and Literary Arts and has been involved with the UAA's honors program. A film maker and writer, besides editor, Mr. Spatz wrote a series of illuminating notes in the current volume. He was joined in shaping it by Contributing Editors Jeane Breinig, assistant professor of English at the University of Alaska Anchorage, and by Patricia Partnow, vice president of Education at the Alaska Native Heritage Center. A final thank you must be provided to the National Endowment for the Arts, which provided a Heritage and Preservation Grant that helped pay the costs of publication of the expanded edition.

Mr. President, Alaska, in fact all of America, is far richer artistically because of the review's presence. It truly is a window for Americans to view society in Alaska at the close of the 20th Century, and a worthy stage for the serious works of all writers as we enter the 21st Century. That is particularly the case with this edition. I commend it and its contributors for its many achievements, and I know all members of the U.S. Senate join me in wishing it continued success.●

#### NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

● Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition of National Hispanic Heritage Month. In my own state of New Jersey, we celebrate and recognize the proud history of a people who have a deep affinity to faith, a strong work ethic, and commitment to family values. Hispanic Americans share a diverse ancestry with countries spanning Europe, Africa, and South and Central America, and close cultural ties to Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, South America, and Spain. This diversity has brought variety and richness to the American mosaic and has strengthened our national character with invaluable perspective, experiences, and values.

For countless years, Hispanic Americans have played an integral role in all walks of life and made our country stronger. Whether it is in the entertainment industry, business, medicine or public service, the contributions of Hispanic Americans cannot be understated. I am proud to represent a state with a large concentration of Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans and immigrants from countless countries in South and Central America.

In counties such as Hudson, Essex, Passaic, Union, Camden, Atlantic and Cumberland, Hispanic Americans have been contributing to my state's diversity for years. In our state legislature, we are proud to have four members of the General Assembly of Hispanic Heritage with Wilfredo Caraballo, Raul "Rudy" Garcia, Nilsa Cruz-Perez and Nellie Pou. At the county level, we have three distinguished members of the Board of Chosen Freeholders with Nidia Davila-Colon, Silverio Vega, and Neftali Cruz in Hudson County. And at the local level, countless Cuban Americans, Puerto Ricans and Central and Southern Americans have achieved the office of council person and mayor. New Jersey was especially proud to elect its first Hispanic member of the House of Representatives with the election of Representative ROBERT E. MENENDEZ, who also serves in the House leadership.

Through my own Italian heritage, I share a special bond with people of Hispanic descent. When Christopher Columbus set sail to discover this continent, it was done so with the financial support of Spain. Hundreds of years later, the Hispanic heritage continues to be an important and critical aspect of our national accomplishments. Hispanic Americans comprise eleven percent of the nation's population. In just a few years, Hispanic Americans will be the largest ethnic group in the United States. Their commitment to this country has not gone unnoticed. Whether it is serving in our Armed forces or through their growing economic consumer strength, Hispanic Americans are indeed thriving and intertwined in the fabric that is this great country.

Activism is important to creating a sense of personal responsibility for

one's community. The Hispanic American community embodies this concept, and should be commended for successfully instilling it in others. The contributions of Hispanic Americans has spread to other communities in a manner that transcends racial and ethnic differences, and I am confident they will continue to grow as a vital component of life in New Jersey and indeed the United States.●

#### OIL ROYALTY VALUATION

● Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I want to state for the record that, had I been able to, I would have voted against the Hutchison amendment to the Interior appropriations bill, which proposed to continue a moratorium on revising Interior regulations governing how much oil companies pay for oil drilled on public lands and resources. I regret that previous commitments prevented my availability to be in the Senate for this critical vote.

This issue seems fairly straightforward. Oil companies are required to pay royalties for on- and off-shore oil drilling. Fees are based on current law which clearly states that "the value of production for purposes of computing royalty on production . . . shall never be less than the fair market value of the production." Revenues generated from these royalties are returned to the federal treasury. However, for many years, oil companies have been allowed to set their own rates.

In the past, I have supported similar amendments which extended a moratorium on rulemaking while affected parties were involved in negotiations to update the regulations. However, this process has been stalled for years, with little possibility of reaching resolution because these legislative riders imposing a moratorium on regulation changes have created a disincentive for oil companies to agree to any fee increases, resulting in taxpayers losing as much as \$66 million a year.

Who loses from this stalemate? The taxpayers—because royalties returned to the federal treasury benefit states, Indian tribes, federal programs such as the Historic Preservation Fund and the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and national parks.

I supported cloture twice to end debate on this amendment because I believe we should vote on the underlying amendment to allow a fair and equitable solution of royalty valuation of oil on federal lands. On the final vote, however, I would have opposed the Hutchison amendment to continue this moratorium because I believe we should halt the process by which oil companies can set their own rules and determine how much they pay the taxpayers for the use of public assets. I do not support a structure which only serves to benefit big oil companies and allows them to continue to be subsidized by the taxpayers.

We should seek fairness for each and every industry doing business on public